HEY, KIDS! POINTLESS GIMMICKS INSIDE!

DARK HORSE COMICS

DEATH OF THE GOON

COLLECTOR'S EDITION! BUY FIVE! (Or 4 for a buck when it's in the quarter bin next month!)

1ST 32pg issue!

NEW ORIGIN!

Is the Goon a gay Republican Puerto Rican transvestite Socialist for Jesus from space?! SHOCK FACTOR!! LOOK AT US, MAINSTREAM MEDIA!! LOOK AT US!!

PLUS!!

INTRODUCING THE MULTICOLORED GOONS!
RED GOON! BLUE GOON! YELLOW GOON!
PLOTS BASED ON PRIMARY COLORS RULE!

The nameless man, the zombie priest, had come to town to build a gang from the undead. But even the undead fear...

THE GOON™

by Eric Powell

colors by Dave Stewart

editor **Scott Allie** assistant editor **Daniel Chabon** designer **Amy Arendts**

publisher **Mike Richardson**

SINCE 1999

Zombies provided by **Jethro and Earl Zombie Wranglerin' Inc.** and **The Adopt-A-Zombie Foundation**

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In these difficult times for the comic-book and publishing markets, it's harder than ever for creator-owned comics to compete for shelf space. You must be willing to change in order to satisfy the wants and needs of the reader, and it is clear by the overwhelming and unwavering sales of the Big Two that *The Goon* needed a facelift to keep up with its competitors. Since sales numbers are never wrong, we hope you enjoy the changes we've made.

– Eric Powell

Dedicated to Mom. This is exactly what she told me I should do with *The Goon*... except for the gay part.

GOON! A WHISKEY TRUCK FELL OVER, AND ALL THE HOBOS ARE PLAYING KING OF THE MOUNTAIN FOR CASES OF HOOCH!
GET YOUR ASS OUT HERE! WE'RE FIGHTIN' FOR PRIDE, [redacted]! AIN'T NO ONE-LEGGED HOBO GONNA KNOCK ME OFF MY WHISKEY.
FRANKY...THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU.
OH, JESUS. YOU FOUND THAT BOX OF OLD-LADY PORN UNDER MY BED, DIDN'T YOU? LOOK, I WAS JUST HOLDING IT FOR A FRIEND.
NO, FRANKY. THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME.
YOU LIKE PENDULOUS OLD-LADY BOOBS, TOO?! I KNEW WE WAS PALS!
FRANKY, MY ORIGIN. IT'S--IT'S NOT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE.

THAT SCARRED, HAUNTED VISAGE WAS A DISGUISE! IN TRUTH, I AM A GREAT WARRIOR FROM AN ALIEN WORLD!
LONG AGO DID MY RACE SUCCUMB TO THE EVIL LORD VOLTRONATHONGAR! BUT BEFORE HE DESTROYED MY HOME PLANET, MY PARENTS SENT ME TO LIVE HERE, AMONGST YOU MERE MORTALS!
YEAH, GOON, THAT'S GREAT. THE WHISKEY?!

AND LO, DID I PLUMMET TO THIS MORTAL WORLD LIKE A FALLEN STAR. BUT NEVER DID I FORGET THE EVILS PERPETRATED AGAINST MY PEOPLE BY LORD VOLTRONATHONGAR!
AND NOW WITH MY THUNDER HAMMER--
AND MY CODPIECE OF POWER, I FIGHT FOR YOU, SMALL PEOPLE OF EARTH!
BUT I CANNOT STAND ALONE. WILL YOU, FRANKY, TAKE UP THE NIPPLE PLATE OF TRUTH AND THE THONG OF NOBILITY TO STAND BY MY SIDE?!
IN TWO WORDS, YES!

POOSH!
WATCH YOUR ASSES, HOBOS! THE NIPPLE PLATE OF TRUTH IS UPON YOU!
NO! WE HAVE TO FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES.
SECRETS OF THE COMIC-BOOK PROS REVEALED!
WHEN DRAWING SUPERHERO COMICS, KIDS, ALWAYS PUT IN BIG SPLASH IMAGES WHENEVER POSSIBLE. ORIGINAL ART WITH GIANT ACTION SHOTS OF WELL-KNOWN COMIC CHARACTERS SELLS GREAT ON EBAY! HECK, REAL STORYTELLING TAKES TIME AND EFFORT AND THAT X-BOX ISN'T GOING TO PLAY ITSELF!

RULES & REGULATIONS OF WRITING SUPERHEROES
WRITTEN BY SOMEONE WHO WRITES SUPERHERO COMICS...POORLY
THERE ARE STRICT CRITERIA WE MUST FOLLOW WHEN MAKING A SUPERHERO COMIC BOOK.
FIRST, WE MUST FIGHT A PETTY VILLAIN, I.E., MUGGER, BANK ROBBER, JEWEL THIEF, CAT BURGLAR, AND IN MATURE-READER COMICS, RAPIST, PREFERABLY IN A WAREHOUSE OR ALLEYWAY.
DRAMATIC, NONSENSICAL PANEL DESIGN AND ARRANGEMENT! CHECK!*
THIS THING IS RIDIN' UP ON ME SOMETHIN' FIERCE!
NEXT, I MUST HAVE AN ANGST-FILLED MONOLOGUE ABOUT MY DEAD PARENTS, A FALLEN COMRADE, LOST POWERS, OR AN UNREQUITED LOVE.
ONLY THEN WILL THE MAIN VILLAIN BE REVEALED, WHEN HE ATTACKS ME WITH WHAT SEEMS TO BE OVERWHELMING FORCE.
YOU EVER SEEN A GANG OF HOBOS BLITZED OUTTA THEIR GOURDS ON 16 CASES OF REDEYE? IF THAT'S NOT AN OVERWHELMING FORCE...
* LIKE A WWII JAPANESE SOLDIER TRAPPED ON A DESERTED ISLAND WHO THINKS THE WAR IS STILL ON, ERIC IS IN THE DEEP SOUTH AND HASN'T SEEN A SUPERHERO COMIC SINCE THE 90'S.

EEK!
WHAT'S THIS? A CITIZEN IN DISTRESS?
IMMACULATELY DETAILED BACKGROUNDS TRACED FROM VECTOR GRAPHICS SOFTWARE!
QUICK! WE MUST HELP THEM.
WAIT! FIRST, A COSTUME CHANGE.
FRANKY, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU.
I WAS RAISED A SMALL BLACK BOY IN A FAMILY OF PUERTO RICAN JEWS WHO BELIEVED JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH.
WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THAT? MY GRANNY WAS A BLACK LADY.
THAT'S EVEN BETTER, FRANKY. TWO CHARACTERS FROM INTERRACIAL FAMILIES! WE'LL GET PRESS ALL DAY LONG.
THIS COMIC WILL NOW BE CONDEMNED BY CONSERVATIVE PUNDITS AND SPREAD ACROSS THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA. NONE OF THOSE THINGS WILL BE DUE TO THE QUALITY OF ITS CONTENT.

IF YOU THINK JESUS IS THE MESSIAH, DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU KINDA A LOUSY JEW?
TO JUSTICE!
EEK!
WELL, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?
A WOMAN IN AN ALLEY. WALKING ALONE. IN AN ALLEY. WEARING A SHORT DRESS. IN AN ALLEY. FOR US TO ATTACK. IN AN ALLEY.
YEAHHH! I KNEW HANGING OUT IN AN ALLEY WOULD PAY OFF!
HOLD, EVILDOERS!

DOOSH!
DOUCHE!
GOON, I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
NO NEED TO SAY ANYTHING, MIRNA. WORDS WOULD ONLY RUIN THIS.
NO, I CAN'T!
MUST WE ALWAYS BE SHIPS PASSING IN THE NIGHT? IS THIS MY DESTINY, TO BE FOREVER ALONE? MUST THE NEEDS OF OTHERS COME ALWAYS BEFORE MY OWN? AM I DOOMED TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY DAYS DEVOID OF A WOMAN'S TOUCH?
FATHER, WHYYYYYY?!
ANGST-RIDDEN MONOLOGUE... CHECK!

GOON! HELP!
GRATUITOUS, UNNECESSARY ASS SHOTS ALSO SELL REALLY WELL ON EBAY!
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW?!
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT WE DO -- COSTUME CHANGE! WE GOTTA SELL MORE TOYS, FRANKY. OUR MERCHANDISING REVENUE IS LOW, AND THOSE ACTION-FIGURE VARIANTS AREN'T GONNA SELL THEMSELVES.
FRANKY, THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST TELL YOU. IN MY YOUTH, AMONGST MY TRIBE OF WARRIOR ESKIMOS, I WAS BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE NARWHAL.
AND FROM THAT DAY FORWARD, I'VE KNOWN: WITH GREAT STRENGTH COMES A CRIPPLING CASE OF HEMORRHOIDS.
SOME STUFF IS HEAVY.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE PUERTO RICAN?
THIS IS THE REBOOT. KEEP UP, FRANKY!

BACK IN FIVE.

GOON'S Book of Girls That Got Too Much or Not Enough Church

A RECENT HARVARD STUDY SHOWS THAT COMIC-BOOK ARTISTS SPEND 82.5% OF THEIR DAY SEARCHING FOR INTERNET PORN AND 9.2% DRAWING COMICS. 67.9% OF THAT PORN WAS ASIAN. AND 98.9% OF IT INVOLVED ANIMALS. 43.1% OF THOSE ANIMALS WERE HORSES.

DOUCHE!
LITTLE DID YOU KNOW, GOON, THAT I STOLE YOUR D.N.A. AND MIXED IT WITH A BOX OF CRAYOLA CRAYONS TO CREATE MY OWN ARMY. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR... THE MULTICOLORED GOONS!
AND YES! YOU CAN BASE ENTIRE PLOTS AROUND PRIMARY COLORS!

BLUE GOON! WITH THE POWER OF UNLIMITED DESPAIR!
WHATEVER.
RED GOON! HE'S A COMMIE!
VODKA!
YELLOW GOON! WHAT HE LACKS IN BRAVERY, HE MAKES UP FOR WITH AN OVERACTIVE PROSTATE!
NYAH, DON'T HIT ME! I GOTTA PEE!
GREEN GOON! WITH THE POWER TO BRING SOCIALISTS TO THEIR KNEES!
TAX THE RICH?! WHY DO YOU HATE YOUR COUNTRY?
AND BLACK GOON! THE MOST DIABOLICAL OF THEM ALL. HE'S EMO!
LEAVE ME ALONE, DAD! THE NEW MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE JUST CAME OUT. GAH!

WOW! THAT DIDN'T TAKE MUCH.
FRANKY, THESE CHARACTERS ARE INCONSEQUENTIAL. WHY WOULD ANYONE GIVE A [redacted] ABOUT MULTI-COLORED GOONS?
THE GOON
BLACK
YELLOW
BLUE
GREEN
RED
OH, I GET IT! MULTIPLE GOONS EQUAL MULTIPLE VARIANT COVERS.
NOW YOU'RE COOKIN' WITH GAS.
GOON! SAVE ME!
OH, THIS IS DEFINITELY A 10.0! GOTTA GET THIS BABY SLABBED!

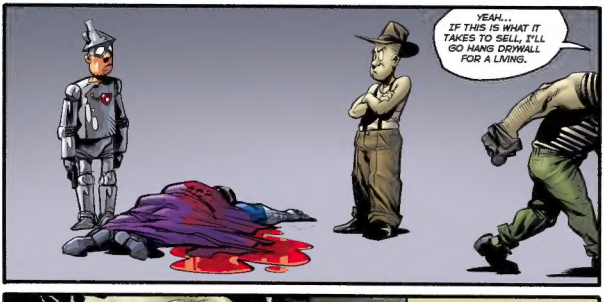
I'M GONNA MURDER YER ASS!
HOLD IT! YOU CAN'T KILL ME. YOU HAVE TO HAVE AN INTERNAL STRUGGLE ABOUT HOW KILLING IS BAD.
GAH! IF I KILL, IT MAKES ME NO BETTER THAN YOU! BUT I WANT TO SO BAD!
UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, GOON!
OH, GOON. FINALLY WE CAN BE TOGETHER.
I'M SORRY, MIRNA. THERE'S SOMETHING YOU NEED TO KNOW.

ARE YOU SUCH A NOBLE HERO THAT YOU CAN'T BREAK YOUR VOW OF CELIBACY EVEN NOW?
UH, NO. I'M GAY.
YOU'RE GAY?! SO AM I!
MEDIA INTEREST
DING! DING! DING!
SO WHO'S GONNA PITCH AND WHO'S GONNA RECEIVE?
BATMAN, I'D BREAK YOU IN HALF.

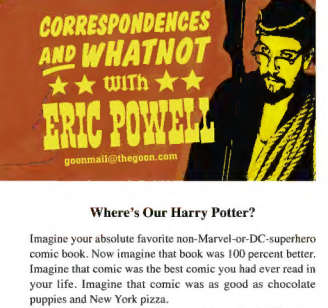
EGAD! IT'S THE SAME METEOR THAT DESTROYED MY HOME PLANET WHERE I WAS GRANTED COUGAR POWERS BY THE MIGHTY SHAMAN OF THE SHAMALAMALIST PEOPLE! SINCE THEN, I'VE LED A DOUBLE LIFE.
UH, IS THIS ANOTHER REBOOT?
YEAH.
YOU STILL GAY?
OH, YEAH. TOTALLY GAY.

I'LL DESTROY THIS METEOR!
BT!
LITTLE DID YOU KNOW, GOON, THAT YOUR LOYAL AND HUMBLE FRIEND WAS THE VILLAIN ALL ALONG.
AND...CHECK!
RULES & REGULATIONS OF WRITING SUPERHEROES

I'M BACK!
BANG!
UGH! I'M DEAD!
STILL DEAD.
I'M BACK!
BANG!
UGH! I'M DEAD!
I'M BACK!
BANG!
UGH! I'M DEAD!


YEAH... IF THIS IS WHAT IT TAKES TO SELL, I'LL GO HANG DRYWALL FOR A LIVING.

ON SECOND THOUGHT... I THINK I'LL STICK WITH THIS GOON.



Where's Our Harry Potter?

Imagine your absolute favorite non-Marvel-or-DC-superhero comic book. Now imagine that book was 100 percent better. Imagine that comic was the best comic you had ever read in your life. Imagine that comic was as good as chocolate puppies and New York pizza.

That comic couldn't be the top-selling comic in this country right now.

Now imagine your favorite story ever (non–Marvel or DC superhero), whether it's a TV show, novel, film, or whatever. That one that does what amazing fiction can by wrapping you inside it and making you sad that you can't really visit the world it created in your mind. Now imagine it was a comic instead.

That comic couldn't be the top-selling comic in this country right now.

Out of the top 1,000 comics sold in the US in 2011, 24 were not Marvel or DC superhero titles. (Sales figures found on ComiChron.com.)

Twenty-four. Out of one thousand. Twenty-four, people. And none of those twenty-four came close to being the top-selling comic. But that's okay; the comic-book industry is being stabilized on the strong backs of Marvel and DC, right? Wrong. Sales across the board on comics have been plummeting for decades. Yeah, yeah, I can hear you now. "Well, all print media is struggling now in the digital age!" You can stuff all those digital-media excuses. Comic sales were dropping long before the advent of e-readers. If anything, the Internet is helping the expansion of comics readership by making new and different material accessible. I myself am proof that Internet buzz can help a creator-owned book succeed.

Over the last couple of years I've been very vocal about the comics industry's lack of diversified content. I feel strongly that we need new, exciting, creator-owned content that generates new readership to fuel our struggling industry, and we need to stop relying on the floundering system of old nostalgia-driven superhero titles from Marvel and DC. We need to create an environment where the best new idea, well executed, could be the top-selling book—where we're not putting all of this industry's efforts to survive into a rehash of a rehash.

I hear comments that we can't do new, different types of material because superheroes are all the comic readers want. But that's because it's the only demographic we continue to sell to—and that's not working so well. We should be selling to the cape readers . . . as well as the readers of every other genre out there. Just like film, books, music, TV, and, for f***'s sake, every other entertainment industry. We've been dying because we are so focused on getting the dollars out of this one demographic that we've forgotten our potential. I love the Marvel and DC characters, too, but, Jesus, am I the only one who gets bored with them? From our sales figures, apparently not. And to all the superhero fan boys that get so bent out of shape over people talking about new creator-owned comics: If this industry were doing better, you'd be getting more of the books you love and at better quality. Not less. Get some perspective. Batman isn't going anywhere.

*(Oh, and by the way, if your avatar is a photo of yourself dressed in Renfest garb . . . you're not allowed to call someone an a**hole. You're just not. You're on the Internet dressed in a frilly shirt and Puss in Boots boots and YOU are calling someone an a**hole? I call bulls***. You just can't do that.)*

Oh, and while I'm on the topic of Internet trolls . . . To those calling me a hypocrite for doing a handful of comics for Marvel and DC in the past while preaching about the lack of focus our industry shows for creator-owned titles, I have this to say: **Marvel and DC comics didn't make me. Creator-owned comics made me.** No one was beating down my door before *The Goon*. I'm appreciative of every job Marvel and DC ever gave me; however, they made money off my name. They wouldn't have given me a job otherwise. We both profited from that work, so I owe them nothing. That being said, Marvel and DC were great companies to work for. I got paid on time, and especially with DC, found their editorial staff a joy to work with. See, that's how it's done, Fox News. **FAIR AND BALANCED, MOTHER****ERS!** So pardon me, Trolly McTroller, for having the courage of my convictions and for having the balls to stick my professional neck out on the line. How about you take into consideration I might possibly be taking away an extra revenue stream by saying the business model of the big two is holding us all back instead of pushing us into the future? No? Oh, well. Nice boots, Harry Mudd.

Where were we? Oh, yeah, with the bitching. I've also heard people make the comparison that Marvel and DC are to creator-owned comics as summer blockbusters are to indie films. WRONG! We aren't talking about commercial versus high art. We are talking commercial versus other types of commercial. If Harry Potter were a Dark Horse comic instead of a novel, it would be struggling to sell ten thousand, just because it's not in a Marvel or DC superhero universe. Where's our Harry Potter? Where's our megahit that comes out of nowhere and draws people into comic shops? Why are we denying ourselves the possibility of that? We are an inbred industry propped up on the spindly legs of Marvel and DC comics. And with 90 percent of our industry being supported by Marvel and DC, which are owned by Disney and Warner Bros., what happens if those two giant corporations, who don't care one bit about funny books, decide that all these characters they own are more profitable in video games, movies, and bed sheets than in comic books? If they close their doors, the comic industry, as we know it, is dead the next day. And that's a ridiculous scenario we've painted ourselves into. That's like if Paramount went out of business, there would be no more movies. We should be making new, creator-owned content in a variety of genres just as vital to sustaining this industry as the big two's superhero titles. And we should have started twenty years ago.

Of course, I'm just some idiot from Tennessee. What do I know?

—Eric Powell

EMPIRE

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